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Advocate of Peace.

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Dreadnought Folly.

The people of the United States have been asked to spend \$140,000,000 this year in maintaining and building up the navy as a means to national safety. As was stated in the last issue of our paper, the naval appropriation bill now before the House of Representatives provides for the construction of two battleships of the dreadnought type, six torpedo-boat destroyers, and eight submarines. In the Naval Affairs Committee a strong effort was made to secure the recommendation again this year of only one battleship.

A minority report was submitted by four members of the committee—Representatives Witherspoon, of Mississippi; Hensley, of Missouri; Buchanan, of Illinois, and Gray, of Indiana. The minority views are set forth in urgent terms with cogent reasoning and the testimony of facts to support their argument for the reduction of the naval program.

Attention is called to the fact that the large increase in appropriation for new ships is due mainly

to the proposed additional battleship, and the gentlemen of the minority submit "that there is no need for these two battleships, or for either of them; that their authorization means a useless expenditure of over \$30,000,000, and that the bill should be amended by striking them out."

A strong section of the report lays stress on the passage of the resolution on the "naval holiday," and maintains that every member of the House who voted in support of that resolution thereby committed himself to the proposition that the burdens of the people should be lessened and that the public funds should not be wasted in further investment in naval armament.

Among the reasons adduced against the construction of more ships are these: 1, a much smaller navy would be amply adequate to defend and protect the country, owing largely to our situation and to the dependence of other nations upon trade relations with us; 2, that there are not officers enough to man the ships we already have, and that if this bill is carried there will within the next two years be 6 more battleships and 51 other ships to supply with officers.

Many other arguments follow, all supported with facts and the testimony of naval experts, which should, it seems to us, serve to convince an open-minded student of the situation that the proposed increase is "inexcusably extravagant and a criminal waste of the public funds."

All the friends of the peace cause should rally to the support of the men in Congress who are trying to oppose this inexcusable increase in armament. Each year, when the time for the annual appropriation comes round, we are treated to a war scare, and every possible measure is taken by the naval party to add weight to their specious plea.

There could be no greater misfortune than for this country, without any conceivable reason, to swing back to the two-battleship program, when for two years past there has been only one ship voted. To return to the old policy would not only be a backward step; it would be a great calamity to the country and to civilization, just at the time when the nations of the world are becoming increasingly interested in such a respite as that which would be afforded by the proposed "naval holiday." It is a singularly appropriate time for the United States to take the lead in reduction of armaments. All the war-burdened nations of the world are looking for some way of escape, and would respond quickly and eagerly to any assured step the United States might take towards emancipation from the dread clutch of militarism. America, if she is to maintain her